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ABSTRACT

Fiscal reductions as well as growing conservatism may have a profound impact on many university programs, including Chicano Studies programs, which are expanding into research, publications, and other areas. To frame the issues of greatest concern to Chicano Studies programs, a small research effort at the University of New Mexico involved the input of 12 knowledgeable respondents at universities in the West and Southwest United States. The respondents served on a Delphi Panel and responded to two questionnaires. On the first, they suggested key issues for Chicano Studies programs. On the second, they ranked the importance of seven current and eight future issues, chosen from the responses to the first questionnaire. Respondents indicated that curriculum issues, academic quality, the potential for program consolidation, and the potential for program expansion were the most important current and future issues. Other issues included renewed interest in Chicano Studies, greater career orientation of Chicano programs, and broadened support for Chicano programs. The report presents five scenario themes for future research: status quo, consolidation/absorption, obsolescence, program development, and post-revisionist. (SB)

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CHICANO STUDIES PROGRAMS AT THE CROSSROADS: ALTERNATIVE FUTURES FOR THE 1980s

By

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and
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Introduction

Chicano Studies Programs across many university campuses are assessing their original missions in light of the economic constraints of the present and the potential role they might play the rest of the decade and beyond. Born in the heyday of Chicano Student activism in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the programs were formed in response to demands that the university curriculum was not reflecting the Chicano experience in traditional disciplines such as history, sociology, politics, literature and other fields. In relatively short order, curriculum was developed, faculty recruited and enrollment in the classes swelled.

Problem Statement

By now, most of the programs have acquired twelve to fifteen years of experience and their on-campus presence is characterized by diversity in scope, resources, visibility, administrative relationships, and also in the degree of institutionalization. The diversity of experience has never been documented. A search of the literature reveals that little is available pertaining to the collective history of

the programs, their institutional patterns, curriculum designs or their funding levels. Systematic data could prove very useful now that the programs are in the midst not only of self-evaluations but also as they confront the issues of the times.

Hard times have fallen on most institutions of higher education, especially on the disciplines of the humanities and social sciences. Since World War II, emphasis on technology has left a permanent mark on university priorities. Scientific breakthrough coupled with generous support for technological research has lured faculty and student interest into the fields of hard science and "high tech." In short, the declining interest in the humanities and social sciences, the academic core of Chicano Studies, has become serious and could become chronic in the years ahead.

Meeting the challenges of the 1980s will be difficult as the continuing recession affects state support for higher education. Revenue shortfalls have affected and will continue to affect all programs that receive state appropriations. Institutions of higher education in the State of New Mexico, for example, just recently received a mandate to curtail expenditures and to save $6.5 million, with the University of New Mexico having to reduce costs by some $3 million. In states such as California and Texas that maintain large university systems, fiscal impacts may be even more pronounced. Reportedly, financial difficulties at the University of

California at Riverside has resulted in the proposed "dismantling" of the Chicano Studies Program there. Budgetary cutbacks for the new fiscal year will be problematic for most public universities and no doubt the reductions will impact instructional budgets across the board. Very likely, however, the humanities and social sciences will assume a disproportionate burden as universities opt to protect the growth trend in the sciences and the applied fields of high technology.

The fiscal reductions may have a profound impact on the Chicano Studies Programs as they complete their self-evaluations and strive to expand their missions into research, publications and other areas. Cutback economics could mean that only essential courses will be offered, practically ending all opportunity to experiment with new curriculum and with interdisciplinary courses. The end result could be a reduction in faculty positions or perhaps the elimination of some programs altogether.

The growing conservatism in the country may also affect the future of Chicano Studies Programs. The backlash from the political right may resurrect the "reactionary attitudes" present at the time <u>El Plan de Santa Bárbara</u> was developed some thirteen years ago. This backward swing of the pendulum coupled with the politics of retrenchment threaten the surrival of many university programs, Chicano Studies and otherwise, which do not assess their options for the future and take steps to realize their ideals.

Purpose and Method of the Study

The present study, "Chicano Studies at the Crossroads," began last November at the University of New Mexico with the idea of carrying out a small research effort that would serve to frame the issues of greatest concern to Chicano Studies Programs. The study was organized under the auspices of the Southwest Hispanic Research Institute with the collaboration of the UNM Chicano Studies Program and with the input of twelve knowledgeable respondents in as many university campuses in the West and Southwest. The twelve respondents were selected to serve on a Delphi Panel for a period of three months as they received and returned, by mail, two separate questionnaires requesting that they identify common issues affecting or likely to affect Chicano Studies Programs. All twelve panelists were current or past program directors, coordinators or had otherwise experienced Chicano Studies Programs first-hand.

The Delphi Panel was chosen as the research technique* for a variety of reasons. First, the study could be conducted via short questionnaires which could be exchanged by mail without having to convene a study group. Second, the Delphi

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*For a description of the Delphi Technique, see Murray Turoff, "The Design of a Policy Delphi," Technological Forecasting and Social Change 2 (1970), pp. 149-171.

process assured anonymity to all respondents, an incentive for them to address the issues unrestrained and forthrightly. Third, the Delphi approach lent itself to the exploratory nature of the study in the sense that the panelists and their collective experience would generate informed judgements on the subject at hand. And fourth, the issue areas identified and later ranked by the panel held the promise of stimulating further study and dialogue by the staffs of Chicano Studies Programs.

The questionnaires for both rounds were developed at the University of New Mexico by a study team organized to oversee the project.* In the first round, the panelists were provided with broad discretion as to their choices for top issues of concern to Chicano Studies Programs. To aid in the collation of responses, however, the instrument did provide a minimum structure. In brief, the twelve panelists were asked to nominate the key issues, problems, initiatives, trends and future developments affecting or likely to affect Chicano Studies Programs in the next decade (1983-1993). The timeframe for the future was kept consistent in all communications with the panelists. In round one the panelists were asked to nominate "surprise events" in the future that could

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*Study team members included Ramón Luis Burrola, Tobías Durán, Rita Martínez-Purson and José Rivera.

emerge and impact the programs positively and negatively. The questionnaire concluded with an open-ended question asking each panelist to write a short narrative on what the future holds for Chicano Studies Programs in general.*

When the questionnaires from round one were returned, the study team checked each one for completeness and for preliminary analysis of responses. The team was well satisfied with the overall attention placed on the questions in terms of the corresponding entries, level of detail, etc. There was no doubt that the panelists had understood the sense of the questions, and that they had replied after careful thought and with a great deal of frankness.

By design, and as noted earlier, the questions had been phrased to solicit wide-ranging issues, utilizing a combination of semi-structured and open-ended questions. The study team compiled a master list of the responses and collated them into major categories in preparation for a round two questionnaire. In all, fifteen distinct items were identified, seven of which were then classified as "current issues affecting Chicano Studies Programs" and eight as "possible issues that may affect Chicano Studies Programs in the near future."

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*See Appendix I for blank copy of questionnaire used in round one.

In the round two questionnaire* the panelists received a summary list of the fifteen items formulated now as "issue statements." For the set of current issues, they were asked to examine and compare the seven items and then rank each one according to a scale of "most important" to "least important." In brief, the issue statements addressed: (a) Need for Curriculum Redesign, (b) Perception of Programs as Peripheral, Marginal and Lacking Legitimacy, (c) Need to Improve Faculty Permanency and Quality, (d) Programs Operate in Atmosphere of Political Conservatism, (e) Decline in Student Enrollment, (f) Lack of General University Community Interest, and (g) Concern Over University Cutbacks and Financial Impacts. Likewise, the set of eight possible future issues were included. Here the panelists were asked to rank them according to a scale of "most likely to occur" to "least likely to occur." The eight issue statements listed were: (a) Programs Will Emphasize Academic Quality, (b) Courses will Become More Career Oriented, (c) Renewed Interest Due to Increase in Chicano Population, (d) Renewed Interest Due to Growing Importance of U.S.-Mexico Relations, (e) Programs Will be Eliminated and Courses Transferred, (f) Programs Will be Consolidated with Ethnic Studies, (g) Broadened Support Due to Renewed Militancy, (h) Program Expansion into Research and Other Missions.

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*See Appendix II for blank copy of questionnaire used in round two.

Results from Rounds One and Two

Tables A and B, following, display the major issues nominated by the panelists in round one and subsequently ranked by them in round two. Table A lists the issue statements (abbreviated form) of current interest in the same order as they appeared in questionnaire two. The scale of importance, from one to seven, tallies by matrix cell the number of panelists who rated each issue statement as to its relative importance,* thereby showing the distribution of rankings within each issue. The final rankings across all items resulted in the following order of importance to the panelists:

Rank No.	Issue Statement
1	Need for Curriculum Redesign
2	Perception of Programs as Peripheral, Marginal and Lacking Legitimacy
3	Concern over University Cutbacks and Financial Impacts
4	Lack of General University Community Interest
5	Decline in Student Enrollment
6	Need to Improve Faculty Permanency and Quality
7	Programs Operate in Atmosphere of Political Conservatism

*The number of responses for both Tables A and B total eleven instead of twelve since one of the round two questionnaires was returned with incomplete rankings; thus, the questionnaire could not be used in the final tallies.

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Table A: Current Issues, Distribution and Rankings

ISSUE STATEMENTS	Scale of Importance: Most Important 1	2	3	4	Least Important 5	6	7	Total Points	Rank
Need for Curriculum Redesign	3	3	0	1	1	1	2	38	1
Perception of Programs as Peripheral, Marginal & Lacking Legitimacy	1	4	2	0	1	2	1	39	2
Need to Improve Faculty Permanency & Quality	2	1	0	3	2	1	2	46	6
Programs Operate in Atmosphere of Political Conservatism	2	0	2	2	0	3	2	48	7
Decline in Student Enrollment	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	44	5
Lack of General University Community Interest	3	1	1	1	2	0	3	43	4
Concern over University Cutbacks and Financial Impacts	2	0	3	2	3	1	0	40	3

Table B lists the issue statements in a similar fashion and addresses eight future possibilities. Here the scale distinguished each statement in terms of likelihood of occurance. The final rankings across all items resulted in the following order of likelihood of occurance as judged by the panelists:

Rank No.	Issue Statement
1	Program Expansion into Research and other Missions
2	Programs Will Emphasize Academic Quality
3	Programs Will be Consolidated with Ethnic Studies
4	Renewed Interest Due to Increase in Chicano Population
5*	Courses will Become More Career Oriented
5*	Renewed Interest Due to Growing Importance of U.S.-Mexico Relations
5*	Programs will be Eliminated and Courses Transferred
8	Broadened Support Due to Renewed Militancy

Summary Analysis

In combination Tables A and B show that the panelists who participated in the study place significant importance on curriculum issues, academic quality and the potential for

*As noted in the Total Points column, these three items tied for fifth place.

Table B: Future Issues, Distribution and Rankings

ISSUE STATEMENTS	Scale of Likelihood of Occurance: Most Likely 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Least Likely 8	Total Points	Rank
Programs Will Emphasize Academic Quality	2	3	2	3	0	0	0	1	34	2
Courses Will Become More Career Oriented	1	1	0	1	4	2	1	1	54	5
Renewed Interest Due to Increase in Chicano Population	1	0	2	3	1	3	0	1	50	4
Renewed Interest Due to Growing Importance of U.S.-Mexico Relations	0	0	2	2	4	1	2	0	54	5
Programs will be eliminated and Courses Transferred	3	0	1	0	0	1	6	0	54	5
Programs Will be Consolidated with Ethnic Studies	2	2	0	2	1	3	1	0	44	3
Broadened Support Due to Renewed Militancy	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	6	77	8
Program Expansion into Research and other Missions	1	5	3	0	2	0	0	0	30	1

program expansion into research and other related missions. The need for curriculum redesign was selected as the top priority in terms of current issues, while program expansion ranked at the top of future agendas most likely to occur. Ranking second from among the futures issues was the prediction that the Chicano Studies Programs will likely emphasize academic quality in the coming decade.

The importance placed in the academic and research areas appears to respond to a frequent comment in the round one questionnaire that the programs as a group were affected by a general perception of marginality. By itself, the issue statement in round two on the perceived lack of legitimacy also rated high on the scale of importance: as shown in Table A, this issue ranked second on the list of seven possibilities. The related issue of lack of general interest in the programs by the university community was not far behind, appearing as the fourth most important issue. The need for continued professional development on the part of Chicano Studies faculty also made the list as a major issue statement, the fact that it ranked sixth out of seven current issues does not necessarily lessen its importance of having been nominated as a real issue.

The concern over university cutbacks and the possible impacts on Chicano Studies Programs, of course, was not suprising. Apart from having been nominated as a major issue by several panelists, Table A shows it as the third most

important issue presently of concern to the programs. The panelists were not asked to translate potential cutbacks to any of the scenarios or possible futures listed on Table B. Of interest, however, is the fact that the panelists did not rank program termination as among the most likely futures. Instead, the panelists as a group thought other outcomes were more probable. For example, the possibility of Chicano Studies Programs being consolidated with other Ethnic Studies ranked higher than termination as an event likely to occur, ranking third versus fifth on the list. Overall, though, and as reported earlier, an increased emphasis on academic quality and program expansion into research and other missions were selected as the alternative futures most likely to occur.

Of the nominations affecting renewed interest in the programs, the growing Chicano population rated higher than other possible factors. Whereas this item ranked fourth in likelihood of occurance, renewed interest due to the growing importance of U.S.-Mexico relations ranked fifth. The possibility of broadened support due to renewed militancy on college campuses, presumably by faculty and student groups, was rated as the least likely future.

Two issues were nominated directly around student issues. Table A shows that decline in student enrollment in Chicano Studies classes was of concern to the panelists although it received a ranking of sixth out of seven in terms of relative importance. In Table B the possibility of courses becoming

more career oriented tied for fifth out of eight possibilities.

Conclusions: Scenario Themes for Future Study

Mainly the Delphi Panel Study was organized to solicit the top issues of current concern as well as likely developments that will affect the Chicano Studies Programs in the coming years. Due to limitations of time and resources, the modest study was carried out only through two rounds of input from the Delphi Panel. The feedback from the Panel, however, suggests many possibilities for future research. As a preliminary design, the study team submits the following scenario themes for consideration by other researchers:

Scenario A: Status Quo Scenario stressing program maintenance, self-preservation, minimal or no expansion with a few retrenchment impacts but overall continuation of the programs as they now exist campus to campus; basically a holding pattern with no real determination of the ultimate character of the programs.

Scenario B: Consolidation/Absorption Scenario where many Chicano Studies Programs would be combined with other Ethnic Studies Programs on campus as one variation or perhaps a more direct absorption of the Chicano Studies curriculum into the traditional disciplines as another; "permanency" might be achieved but with the trading off of autonomy and Chicano control.

Scenario C: Obsolescence Scenario where some Chicano Studies Programs no longer serve a recognized university purpose and coupled with the need to conserve scarce resources as well as recognition of substantial national conservatism, universities justify elimination of all "peripheral" programs related to the declining enrollments in the social sciences and humanities, an action which does not single out Chicano Studies Programs per se but no matter.

Scenario D: Program Development Scenario where Chicano Studies Programs successfully expand their original instructional missions by adding components in research, publications and community outreach; supplemental resources from on-and off-campus would be sought and acquired although competition for new funds would intensify accordingly; links to community development activities, such as Chicano leadership training would become more common; Chicano Studies courses would lean toward professional preparation of students into new careers.

Scenario E: Post-Revisionist Scenario where the field of Chicano Studies would increase in importance to academicians and researchers who perceive the field as an extension of the growing interest in Borderlands Studies, Hispanic Politics, etc.; the growing Hispanic population added to a new era of U.S.-Mexico relations surfaces the need for more studies about and by Chicanos, particularly for use in public policy discussions with a focus on borderlands issues; Chicano Studies would outgrow the earlier revisionist approach and focus more on knowledge-building around issues at the cutting edge of the Chicano experience; centers of excellence would emerge from campus to campus as the programs specialize in areas of the field in line with their resources and natural interests; a "publication explosion" results, signaling a permanent field of study.

Most of the Chicano Studies Programs were introduced in the late 1960s and early 1970s at scores of colleges and universities as a response to student grievances that the mainstream curriculum in the traditional disciplines ignored vital elements of the Chicano experience. Part of the initial mission of the programs has been accomplished as evidenced by the introduction on many campuses of new courses, special topic seminars, the recruitment of Chicano faculty to teach the courses, including some permanent faculty by now tenured in the departments, and on some campuses, research components

have been added to stimulate new areas of study in and out of the classroom. The full story has never been told. The challenge of the 1980s, however, may not be to tell a story about the past, but to create a new vision for the future.

Appendix I: Round One Questionnaire

II: Round Two Questionnaire

Appendix I: Round One

QUESTIONNAIRE: Background Information and Instructions

1. Purpose: The attached questionnaire is designed with a twofold objective, firstly to gather basic information about each of the Chicano Studies Programs participating in the study and secondly, to solicit nominations of key issues that are affecting or are likely to affect the Programs at large in the next decade (1983-1993).

2. Process: The questionnaire includes a total of 17 items. About half of the items can be completed simply by a checkmark or by an entry of a specific numerical response (Section One). The other half of the items call for short, narrative responses that can be entered without having to look up any reference material (Section Two). These latter responses, however, do require careful thought and reflection just prior to entering the specific comments.

3. Time Required: A trial run of the questionnaire indicates that all items can be completed in about an hour. Please read the questionnaire all the way through once before starting to enter the responses so that you can become familiar with the instrument as a whole, but also, so that you can get a "feel" for the differences across the questions (especially those in Section Two).

4. Confidentiality: The analysis of responses will be presented in aggregate terms with no reference whatsoever to your particular responses or to the Chicano Studies Program with which you are affiliated now or in the past.

5. Questionnaire Results: Once the general responses have been analyzed and recorded, you will receive a summary report of all responses for a second round of participation (mid-February). After the second round, the summary findings will be presented at two upcoming conferences:

   (a) the National Association for Chicano Studies Conference in Ypsilanti, Michigan (April); and,

   (b) the Chicano Studies Section of the Western Social Science Conference in Albuquerque (April).

   Whether you are able to attend any of the conferences or not, you will nevertheless receive a copy of the final paper concluding the study.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Section One:

Background Data on Chicano Studies Program at your Institution

1. Year in which the Program was started? 19___.

2. Check major components in the Program.

_____ Instruction
_____ Research
_____ Student Services
_____ Other(s) (Please specify)

3. Does the Program lead to and offer a degree(s)?

_____ Yes
_____ No

3a. If yes, at what level?

_____ Bachelor's
_____ Master's
_____ Other (Please specify)

4. Number of faculty affiliated with the Program?

_____ Full-time
_____ Part-time & Adjunct

5. Average number of students enrolled in Chicano Studies classes per semester? _____

6. Does the Program have Departmental status?

_____ Yes
_____ No

7. What courses are offered officially through the Program and the cooperating departments? (Please attach a current, available list).

8. How is the Program organized internally and within the university administrative structure? (Please attach a current, available organizational/administrative chart).

9. (Please attach any other available information about the Program, for example, brochures, annual reports, etc.).

Section Two:

Nomination of key issues, problems, initiatives, trends, events and future developments that are affecting or are likely to affect Chicano Studies Programs at large in the next decade (1983-1993)

10. Please nominate the top two ISSUES of any kind, that are presently of vital importance to Chicano Studies Programs at large. (Please enter below two short sentences or phrases).

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

11. Nominate the two major PROBLEMS presently confronting Chicano Studies Programs that you are familiar with.

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

12. Please identify any present INITIATIVES (by the Programs) you are aware of to resolve the kinds of problems noted in question 11 above.

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

13. In your observation of or experience with Chicano Studies Programs over the past few years or so, can you identify a couple of noticeable TRENDS in the structure, purpose or general operations of the Programs? (Please nominate the two trends that you consider of the highest significance.)

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

14. Looking now to the FUTURE of Chicano Studies Programs, i.e., the next ten years or so, please nominate the top two issues or problems that the programs will most likely face.

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

15. Apart from your response to question 14 above on the most likely future items, please nominate two "SURPRISE EVENTS" that could emerge in the next ten years that would affect the Programs in a positive way.

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

16. What about two "SURPRISE EVENTS" in the next ten years that would affect the Programs in a negative way? (Please nominate two).

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

17. Lastly, please enter a general statement below as to what you think the future holds for Chicano Studies Programs (the next ten years or so).

Appendix II:

ROUND TWO QUESTIONNAIRE

Part I: Current Issues Affecting Chicano Studies Programs

Instructions:

Below is a summary list of the major issues nominated by respondents in the Round One Questionnaire. Please examine and compare the seven items and then rank each one according to a scale of most important to least important (1 = most important, 2 = second most important .....7 = least important). As your frame of reference, please consider not only the Chicano Studies Program at your institution but also keep in mind other Chicano Studies Programs you are reasonably familiar with.

Rank No.	Issue Statement
_____	The Programs need to reassess and redesign the present curricula.
_____	The Programs lack legitimacy and are perceived as peripheral and marginal.
_____	The Programs need to improve on the quality and permanency of faculty.
_____	The Programs at present operate in an atmosphere of political conservatism.
_____	Student enrollment in Chicano Studies courses has been declining over the years.
_____	The general university community at present does not evidence much interest in the Programs.
_____	The Programs are concerned about future financial support due to general cutbacks in funds available to universities.

Part II: Possible Issues that May Affect Chicano Studies Programs in the Near Future

Instructions:

Below is a summary list of major issues nominated by respondents in the Round One Questionnaire that may affect the Chicano Studies Programs in the near future (from the present through the next ten years). Please examine and compare the eight items and then rank each one according to a scale of most likely to occur to least likely to occur (1 = most likely, 2 = second most likely.....8 = least likely).

Rank No.	Issue Statement
_____	The Programs will emphasize quality of the academic component.
_____	The Chicano Studies courses will become more career oriented in response to employment goals of students.
_____	The increase in the Chicano population will produce a renewed interest in Chicano Studies courses and programs.
_____	The growing importance of U.S. - Mexico relations will carry over to a renewed interest in Chicano Studies Programs.
_____	Chicano Studies Programs will be eliminated and existing courses will be transferred to or incorporated into other academic units.
_____	Chicano Studies Programs will not be eliminated entirely but will be consolidated with other Ethnic Studies Programs (or equivalent).
_____	Chicano militancy will emerge again on college campuses and will broaden the base of support for Chicano Studies Programs.
_____	The Chicano Studies Programs will expand their original academic missions to include research and other knowledge-building activities.